

## HOT POT RESORTS

Long before white men settled Midway the Ute Indians roamed the valley. They had seen and knew about the strange lime rock mounds and were mystified by the hot water and rising vapor. Mark Smith and Jesse McCarell in 1859 were the first white men on record to explore the rock craters later known as the Hot Pots.

The larger group of hot pots were located in the mouth of Snake Creek Canyon and extend east from there about two miles. The water in these pots varies in temperature from seventy degrees to 112 degrees, and almost every spring the water is a different temperature. These waters are heavily impregnated with lime and some of the cone shaped pots have sealed themselves shut. Due to their heat and the lime and mineral deposits, these pools have been used and advertised as health pools.

The following is taken from "S. H. Epperson, Pioneer," a journal written by Simon S. Epperson: "The hot pots are mostly cone shaped and of many different sizes, about twenty of them are filled with water which ran over the top. Some are fifteen feet in depth and some appear to be bottomless. The cone of the largest is two hundred feet in diameter and one hundred feet high. They are formed by the constant flow of the lime water. A weight was lowered in the large cone, and no bottom was



Valley and purchased equipment which he placed in a new factory building near his home. His results were profitable, and he soon built a larger factory across the street where the Robert Mitchell home now stands. "With his sons, Joseph and William he gathered milk from neighbors and friends and soon established an extensive cheese market, including a Salt Lake City outlet.

Gottlieb, Ulrich and Christian Abegglen, together with Fred Barben, also operated a successful cheese factory in White Pine Country in the 1880's.

As an outgrowth of the cooperative dairy herds, a cooperative creamery was also established, with nearly everyone in town contributing something to the project, known as "The People's Creamery." Some who deserve special credit for their cheese making efforts include the Hubers, Sulsers, Schneitters, Abplanalps, Mosers, Abegglen, Probsts, Burgeners, Murries, Haslers, Buhlers, Kummers and Haueters.

Other creamery projects that were developing included a butter plant on the Vincent Farm operated by William North. Mark Jeffs built a creamery south of Johnson's Mill, but this venture later burned down.

Frank Bagley and Ewin Danner operated a butcher plant and receiving station near the Charleston Bridge railroad station, shipping much of their surplus by train to Salt Lake City.

The Mutual Creamery established in Heber City bought out The People's Creamery, but those in the cooperative took over the Gottfried Buehler store building and continued operating under the direction of Joseph Buhler and August Kohler. These operators shipped a high quality butter to Ogden under the label "Wild Rose Butter." Later Albert Kohler and Paul Smith operated the creamery until about 1930.

Fluid milk transportation between Midway and Salt Lake City became popular in the 1930's and creamery operations were soon unprofitable and were forced to close. The milk transportation, however, increased business in the valley considerably, and farmers are now realizing some \$1.5 million a year out of this enterprise.

#### FISH HATCHERY

Midway Fish Hatchery, operated by the Utah Department of Fish and Game, began in 1909 as a private trout farm and has grown from that time to its present importance in the sports picture of eastern Utah.

The hatchery ground was homesteaded by James B. Hamilton in 1876 and from then until 1909 was used for farming. The Provo Valley Trout Company purchased the land. They also purchased the water right to the spring that headed in the John Murri property. The water was dammed up at intervals to raise fish. A home was built near the stream and eight fish runs were also constructed by Joseph Nelson and Mr. Erickson.

In 1912 the Wasatch Trout Company purchased the hatchery and operated it until 1916 when John and William L. Van Wagoner bought the site and began regular marketing of fish to miners near Midway and Park City. George Van Wagoner and Bliss Titus cared for the plant.

The Van Wagoners operated the hatchery until 1921 when a private club, the Timpanogos Rod Club, under the direction of E. M. Bagley, president, purchased the property. The hatchery business was closed down and the streams used as fishing waters for club members only.

The State Fish and Game department leased the hatchery land in 1924 and began a long range program to improve the facilities. Cement runs, large ponds and streams and living facilities for those who operate the hatchery have been constructed. In 1939 Alma Durtschi and Angus Thacker patented a revolving screen to separate fish and keep them in their respective streams. In five months of operation the hatchery produced more than 5,000,000 trout annually for stocking rivers and lakes in the area. The fish are transported in special trucks to the Duchesne and Strawberry Rivers, Provo and south fork of the Provo River, Weber River, Wolf Creek, Deer Creek, Wanship Reservoir, Deer Creek Reservoir, Strawberry Lake, Moon Lake and a few of the Grandaddy lakes.

Though no records were kept, it is believed that the following have supervised the hatchery since 1909: Elmer Madsen, George Van Wagoner, Bliss Titus, Obrem Barrett, Henry Scheuller, Ben Butler, George Cox and David E. Wright. The hatchery is state owned and operated and is reported to be one of the largest and best hatcheries in the country.

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The Big Hot Pot at Midway. The "pot" was formed as boiling lime water bubbled over the edge. The bottom of the pool of boiling water has not been found, though many have tried. The water from the pot is now used in pools at the Homestead resort.

found at one hundred and fifty feet." Of the big pot it has been said that water used to run over the top in the spring of the year and down the sides onto the fields.

"In one of the dry craters," continued the Journal, "called Snake Creek Den, between four and five hundred rattlesnakes were killed in a single day. In the spring they appeared on the outside of the crater and formed into groups that would fill a bushel basket. They would tie themselves into knots with their heads sticking out in all directions for protection. The country around these pots is apparently hollow as indicated by sounds caused by rumbling wheels passing over it."

These pots were taken up as homestead grounds in 1875, by Samuel Thompson, Tom Mantle and Hyrum Shelton. On March 10, 1888 Andrew Luke and John Busby purchased the pots for \$600 and renamed the area Luke's Hot Pots.

Originally, Luke's Hot Pots was paid for with an Indian saddle horse and a secondhand sewing machine. It later sold for more than \$100,000.

In 1878 Simon Schneitter bought from Samuel Thompson, and with a few chickens and cows started to farm his ground. When Park City

was developed into a mining town and Provo was settled, people heard of the hot pots and would go to Schneitter's in their wagons to see these unusual craters. This started Mr. Schneitter thinking about a resort. In 1886 a two story brick hotel and a swimming pool were started. The hotel, still in use, was then known as "The Virginia House." A hole was drilled at the base of the large hot pot and the water was piped to the pool. "Schneitter's Hot Pots" were known throughout the entire mountain area. The most discriminating people praised the wonderful food prepared under the direction of Mrs. Fannie Schneitter. Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Schneitter were noted for their warmth and hospitality. Thousands of people thronged to the resort throughout the year.

The resort was then either leased or rented to Thomas Monks before Jacob Schneitter bought it from his father. Frank Monks writes of his father's operation:

"Father ran the resort for some seven years and as I remember the conversation in those early days, they drew crowds then creating horse races. Some bathing helped to hold interest too. They had the two enclosed swimming pools constructed entirely of lumber. One was smaller than the other and furnished the participating swimmers a rather hot bath, as it was much warmer than the larger one. The two story brick building which seemed to be the outstanding building in those days was equipped to sleep the guests. There were twelve rooms. In connection with this they had a lumber dining room of fair size, and a kitchen. Monk's fried chicken was very well known in Salt Lake City and other nearby towns. The horse and buggy was the means of transportation so their



A very early picture of Schneitter's Hot Pots resort, now The Homestead, showing the swimming pool and bathhouse.